

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of the claims replaces all prior versions and listings of the claims in relation to the present patent application.

Listing of the Claims

1. (previously presented): A method of securing a welding electrode to a welding torch using a collet, comprising:
 - disposing the welding electrode through a collet body;
 - disposing a collet operable to receive the welding electrode therethrough into the collet body;
 - urging the collet against a first portion of the collet body to compress an end portion of the collet against the welding electrode; and
 - urging the collet further into the collet body to dispose the end portion of the collet into a cylindrical portion of the collet body having a diameter corresponding to the compressed end portion of the collet to prevent the end portion of the collet from expanding.
2. (original): The method as recited in claim 1, disposing the welding electrode through the collet.
3. (original): The method as recited in claim 1, comprising threading the collet body to the welding torch to secure the collet body to the welding torch.
4. (original): The method as recited in claim 1, wherein urging the collet against a first portion of the collet body comprises disposing the collet within a backcap and threading the backcap to the welding torch.
5. (original): The method as recited in claim 1, wherein urging the collet further into the collet body comprises further threading the backcap to the welding torch.

6. (original): A collet body adapted to cooperate with a collet to secure a welding electrode to a welding torch, comprising:

a first cylindrical inner portion having a first diameter;

a second cylindrical inner portion having a second diameter, the second diameter being less than the first diameter, and

a surface disposed intermediate the first and second cylindrical inner portions,

wherein the surface is configured to compress an end of a collet having an initial outer diameter intermediate the first and second diameters to a final outer diameter less than the second diameter as the collet is disposed against the surface to enable the end of the collet to enter the second cylindrical inner portion.

7. (original): The collet body as recited in claim 6, wherein the second cylindrical inner portion prevents the end of the collet from expanding when the end of the collet is disposed within the second cylindrical inner portion.

8. (original): The collet body as recited in claim 6, wherein the surface is tapered from the first cylindrical inner portion to the second cylindrical inner portion.

9. (currently amended): The collet body as recited in claim 6, comprising a third cylindrical inner portion having a third diameter less than the second diameter.

10. (original): The collet body as recited in claim 6, wherein the second cylindrical inner portion centers the collet within the collet body as the collet is disposed within the collet body.

11. (currently amended): A ~~kit for a~~ welding torch system, comprising:

a first collet having an outer diameter and an inner diameter, wherein the inner diameter is configured to compress against a welding electrode having a defined diameter disposed through the first collet; and

a collet body securable to the welding torch, the collet body comprising:

a first inner portion configured to compress an end portion of the first collet against the welding electrode as the first collet is urged against the first inner portion; and

a cylindrical inner portion having a diameter less than the outer diameter of the first collet, wherein the cylindrical inner portion receives the compressed end portion of the first collet as the first collet is urged further into the collet body and the cylindrical inner portion is configured to prevent the compressed end portion of the first collet from expanding.

12. (original): The system as recited in claim 11, wherein the first collet has a tapered end surface that is configured to compress the end portion of the first collet as the collet is urged against the first inner portion.

13. (original): The system as recited in claim 12, wherein the first inner portion is tapered.

14. (original): The system as recited in claim 12, wherein the collet body comprises a second inner portion, the second inner portion being tapered to cooperate with the tapered end surface of the collet to limit travel of the collet relative to the collet body.

15. (original): The system as recited in claim 11, comprising a second collet having the outer diameter of the first collet and a second inner diameter greater than the inner diameter of the first collet to enable the second collet to receive a second welding electrode having a second defined diameter greater than the defined diameter of the first collet.

16. (original): The system as recited in claim 11, wherein the first inner portion compresses an end portion of the second collet against the second welding electrode as the second collet is urged against the first inner portion.

17. (original): The system as recited in claim 16, wherein the cylindrical inner portion of the collet body receives the compressed end portion of the second collet as the

second collet is urged further into the collet body and the cylindrical inner portion is configured to prevent the compressed end portion of the second collet from expanding.

18. (original): The system as recited in claim 11, comprising the welding electrode.

19- 25. (cancelled)